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STATINTL

## Henry Taylor / Soviet strength



OUR Central Intelligence Agency finds that while the Soviet swimming bear stalks increasingly all the seas of the world, including the Caribbean inside our own defense perimeter, the Red land and air forces are also being built up on a scale hitherto unrevealed.

During the period that Robert S. McNamara was Secretary of Defense he decommissioned more than 100 U.S. naval craft even while we were fighting the Vietnam war. Even to this day only two intelligence ships like the Pueblo are left out of the 10 that Mr. McNamara inherited. The Soviet swimming bear consists of 1,575 ships of recent construction, as described in this column on Dec. 16, against 894 built in our country in the same period.

THE Soviet air force has opened on a crash basis two new military pilots' schools at Stavropol and Saratov, and reopened at Boras the Oglebsk higher military aviation school which was closed in the late 1920s. Moreover, the Red air force is now shortening by four or five months the usual four-year pilot training course. Why?

In contrast, Gen. John P. McConnell, in his final testimony to the Senate Appropriations Committee before his retirement as chief of the U.S. Air Force, stated: "As I leave the Air Force it has less airpower than when I became its chief of staff four and a half years ago." And, as for outer space, former National Aeronautics and Space Director James E. Webb on retiring stated: "We are No. 2 in space with no hope of catching up in the immediate future." Moreover, the entire So-

viet space program is military-oriented.

The Red Army has approximately 140 divisions. The peak strength of the U.S. Army in the Vietnam war's most intense period was 19 divisions. Prior to the Vietnam war our army had 16 divisions.

The Red Army also has 2,815,000 soldiers and 12,250 military aircraft in the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact contingents. The opposing NATO, if you include the French forces, now has 1,950,000 soldiers and 4,200 planes in western Europe. The Warsaw Pact force now contains nearly a million more soldiers and about three times the air force of NATO.

FOR example, do we ever hear of the military force of Red satellite Bulgaria? Well, this force is aimed at adjacent Greece, which is the key to the Eastern Mediterranean. The Kremlin has gradually and quietly built and equipped new and growing forces that now heavily outnumber the strength of the Greek army and air force. Bulgaria's infantry is now highly mobile, new tank formations are constantly entering service and the Bulgarian air force is receiving the best fighter and bomber planes used by the Soviet air force itself.

More than 300,000 Russian troops are stationed in East Germany. These comprise 14 fully mechanized divisions. A full 42,500 Red soldiers ring Berlin alone. This East German contingent is the Kremlin's most western force, for several divisions stand only 93 miles from the Rhine. The divisions are the cream of the Red crop. "The best they've got," reports the CIA.

A weaker military posture inevitably produces a weaker political posture. The documented, grim warning in all this makes the Kremlin attempt to lull us to sleep patently absurd.